



Governor and Presiding Officers Sign Green Purchasing Bill

Sets the Stage for Development of a Green Purchasing and Reporting Program

(Annapolis, MD) -- Governor O'Malley and the Presiding Officers today signed the Environmentally Preferable Procurement bill (HB 629) which enables State government to leverage its enormous purchasing power to increase demand for green products - moving the marketplace toward responsible resource use. The legislation was sponsored by the Department of General Services (DGS) and sets the stage for Maryland to develop a model comprehensive green purchasing and reporting program. It takes effect October 1, 2014.

The legislation expands the authority and composition of the Maryland Green Purchasing Committee which is chaired by DGS and was established in 2010 to advance green purchasing strategies. One of the key components of the bill is to expand the State's focus on environmental preference beyond recycled content to include other beneficial characteristics such as energy and water efficiency.

The bill also strengthens the committee's ability to hold agencies accountable for using its green purchasing specifications and guidelines, which are not currently required by law. Agencies will be required to report annually to DGS on the purchase of environmentally preferable products and services as a percentage of their gross purchases. The Maryland Green Purchasing Committee will establish the framework and format for the State agency reports. The data collected will help drive improvements in performance.

"While other states and the federal government are tackling these same issues, Maryland's approach addresses the effective implementation of both policy and compliance," said DGS Secretary Alvin C. Collins. "The specifications for environmentally preferable products and services will move Maryland forward in procuring products and services with benefits to our State such as saving energy and preventing pollution. Just as important, the requirement that the Committee develop a format for reporting will hold state agencies accountable for what they buy."

The legislation increases the membership of the Maryland Green Purchasing Committee to include the State Treasurer and the Secretaries of Information Technology and Education, or their designees.